

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim Amendments

Claims 1–14 are pending in the present application, where claims 15–29 are withdrawn. By this amendment, claim 5 has been canceled and claims 1–4 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 1–4 and 6–14 are currently under consideration after this amendment. Further reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the above amendments. No new matter has been entered. Applicant respectfully submits that these claims are in condition for allowance.

Amendment and cancellation of certain claims is not to be construed as a dedication to the public of any of the subject matter of the claims as previously presented.

Remarks

Drawings

With this amendment, applicant submits updated drawings to overcome the Office's objection to the currently filed drawings.

Claim Objections

The claims were amended to correct informalities and to conform to the grammatical and formatting requirements of the MPEP. Thus, this objection should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 1 has been amended to overcome the § 112 rejections. Support for the amendments can be found at, for example, ¶ 0028 of the published specification.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 2, 8, 9 and 11 stand rejected under § 102 as being anticipated by Shiina et al. (EP 0 698 464) ("Shiina EP").

Applicant has amended the subject matter of claim 5 into claim 2, thereby overcoming this rejection. Neither Shiina EP nor Lammers discloses "wherein the thickness of the skin is within a range from 1 to 10 mm; the density of the foamed body is from 0.1 to 0.01 g/cm³; the diameter of the foamed body is from 5 to 25 mm; and the thickness of the reinforcing members is

from 0.05 to 0.5 mm” as recited by claim 5. Accordingly, applicant requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 6, 10, 12 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiina EP in view of Abe et al. (*Study on Foaming of Crosslinked Polyethylene*) and Almanza et al. (*The microstructure of polyethylene foams produced by a nitrogen solution process*).

Claim 1 has been amended to recite polyolefin pellets, comprising 0.25 PHR to 0.5 PHR of a cross-linking agent and from 5 PHR to 30 PHR of a foaming agent. Support for this amendment can be found at, for example, ¶ 0043 of the published specification. Therefore, claim 1, and the claims dependent therefrom, are allowable for at least this reason. Applicant requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 1, 6, 10, 12 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiina EP in view of Shiina et al. (JP 2002-192548 A) (“Shiina JP”).

Neither Shiina EP nor Shiina JP discloses a storage elastic modulus of polyolefin pellets as recited by claim 1. For at least this reason, Shiina EP in view of Shiina JP does not render obvious claim 1 and the claims dependent therefrom. Applicant requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 3-5 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiina EP in view of Shiina et al. (US 3,987,134) (“Shiina US”).

Neither Shiina EP nor Shiina US discloses the diameter of the foamed body. The molded article thickness disclosed in Shiina US 3,987,134 is not the thickness of a foamed body; instead, it is the thickness of a foam composite. Applicant requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiina EP in view of Lammers (US 3,773,875).

Claim 5 was amended into claim 2. Neither Shiina EP nor Lammers discloses “wherein the thickness of the skin is within a range from 1 to 10 mm; the density of the foamed body is

from 0.1 to 0.01 g/cm³; the diameter of the foamed body is from 5 to 25 mm; and the thickness of the reinforcing members is from 0.05 to 0.5 mm” as recited by claim 5. Accordingly, applicant requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance, which action is courteously requested. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including Extension of Time fees to Deposit Account No. 14-1437. Please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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